

E Rand violence: 17 bodies are found

By Sapa and Citizen Reporter

AT least 17 bodies were found in violence-torn East Rand townships at the weekend and yesterday, Witwatersrand police reported.

They said in a statement that seven bodies were found on Saturday in Katlehong, Tokoza and Vosloorus.

Eight bodies were picked up by security forces on Sunday in various East Rand townships — and police found the body of a man in Mavimbela section, Katlehong, about 9am yesterday

Citizen 4/10/94

4/1 17 bodies found in East Rand townships over the weekend.

11/1 Gunmen fire on "Peace Tour" with Cyril Ramaphosa and SACP's Joe Slovo at Mazibuko hostel in Katlehong; SDU and bodyguards return fire; three killed — a child, an unnamed woman, and press photographer Abdul Sharif. Police shot 1 SDU member, arrested 3, and one man from hostel.

17/1 SADF refuse to escort Thokoza refugees back to re-occupy invaded houses, saying SAP should do it.

2/2 SADF to deploy 2500 troops to replace SAP's Internal Stability Division in East Rand, under Transitional Executive Committee command; will assist people to return to homes, restore administration and social services.

Police say people killed in violence continues; death rate on East Rand now 8 a week, as opposed to over 50 a week in late 1993.

28/3 State drops 42 of 60 cases brought against 32 Battalion members; Attorney general says no evidence exists to prosecute.

14/4 National Peacekeeping Force replaces SADF troops patrolling East Rand; NPKF will have less than 900 troops; about 1/3 of total NPKF force is from MK, rest from SADF and homeland armies.

20/4 Residents and hostel dwellers in clash at Angola hostel in Thokoza; 5 people including 1 NPKF soldier killed in first attack. NPKF commanding officer refuses to allow troops to enter hostel to find killers; 100 troops mutiny and are confined to barracks. In gun battle following, 20 people killed, including photographer Ken Oosterbroek; 2 other journalists wounded. NPKF withdrawn from "flashpoints", replaced by SADF. NPKF to continue to "guard key points" (schools and hospitals).

27/4 First democratic elections:-- Human Rights Watch reports national death toll from violence drops by 60 per cent in May, after the elections

15/5 SADF troops cordon off and search 3 hostels in Vosloorus

16/5 12 people killed in Thokoza — reported as fighting between SDU members in Katlehong; killings after 25 May include: 2 deaths in Katlehong, 3 in Thokoza, 1 in Daveyton, 1 in Germiston.

8/6 Police say 55 policemen killed, 124 wounded in 600 attacks on police in the Witwatersrand in first six months of 1994

July: Tensions and reported fighting between SDUs and provincial ANC leaders; SANDF to remain in townships; 4 killed in Katlehong, another 4 at their funeral. Katlehong's Mazibuko Hostel set alight; snipers shoot firefighters. SDUs say hostels should be destroyed, not turned into family units. Gunmen kill 11 in drive-by shooting in Katlehong. SDU spokesmen say they are not involved in continued unrest. Parabats (44 parachute brigade) sent to East Rand

3/8: 51 bodies remain unclaimed at Germiston mortuary from unrest; police report one or two dead a day. Government buried 273 unidentified bodies in late 1993.

51 bodies unclaimed at mortuary

Fifty-one unidentified bodies are lying at the Germiston government mortuary and unless they are claimed each will be given a pauper's burial.

The bodies, most of them with gunshot and hack wounds, are those of victims of the violence in the townships of Katlehong, To-

She said that reports on unrest—related incidents in these areas had decreased considerably and that at present the situation there could be described as calm.

Relatives

Moerane said these bodies had since been buried at the Rietfontein Cemetery near Germiston.

Legally, a body can be kept for a maximum of 21 days in a government mortuary before it is given a pauper's funeral.

Star 03/08/94

2500 troops to East Rand
SADF takes over as NPKF mutinies
W/M 22-28/04/94
Chris Louw

THE National Peacekeeping Force on the East Rand has been confined to barracks after more than 100 members mutinied on Tuesday, allegedly refusing to obey orders and locking their commander, Lieutenant Colonel Quinton Painter, in his vehicle. SADF troops have now officially moved back in to the townships.

Clamp down

THE massacre of 12 people in Tokoza on Friday night, for reasons not yet established, has sent shudders through the township — and the rest of the country.

Not that these killings are the first since the election and the inauguration of President Mandela.

There have been more than 50 deaths in Natal — that most violent of provinces — and that should have had alarm bells ringing.

What distresses us most is the fact that killings go on despite the almost trouble-free election, the way in which Whites and Blacks took part in the poll without any racial animosity, and the acceptance of Mr Mandela as President by all sections of the community. Indeed, reconciliation and a united nation have been President Mandela's main theme both before and after his inauguration.

He had always condemned the violence that wracked the country and will no doubt be horrified if it is resumed.

Citizen 16/5/94

Moffat Mahlangu/ Sotho Section, Vosloorus

On 16 April 1994 (11 days before the elections) Moffat's brother, Jacob Mahlangu was shot dead by people in a passing taxi. At least two other people were shot dead that evening from the same taxi. It was almost dark, the lights in the township were off (not only the Apollo lights, but the general electricity supply) – this was uncommon and raised suspicions that cutting the electricity was by design to facilitate the attack.

Jacob has left home to see a friend and was walking along Dibetso Street at about 18 30 / 19 00, when he was shot dead in a nearby street (on corner of Roets Drive Way and Mokoena Street). Moffat went to the scene of the incident and was told that the perpetrators had been in a kombi. The police were already on the scene; shortly thereafter they apprehended the alleged perpetrators. Moffat thinks 4 or 5 people were arrested.

Neither Moffat nor his family ever followed up with the police investigation. – Moffat says his mother was not keen for them to do so as it would only bring more heartache. He does not know if there was a trial. During the TRC process he heard there was an amnesty

case, when someone came to the house to tell them that there were amnesty applicants appearing at the Vosloorus Civic Centre. His mother, Miriam Mahlangu gave a statement to the TRC and received R30 000 in reparations.

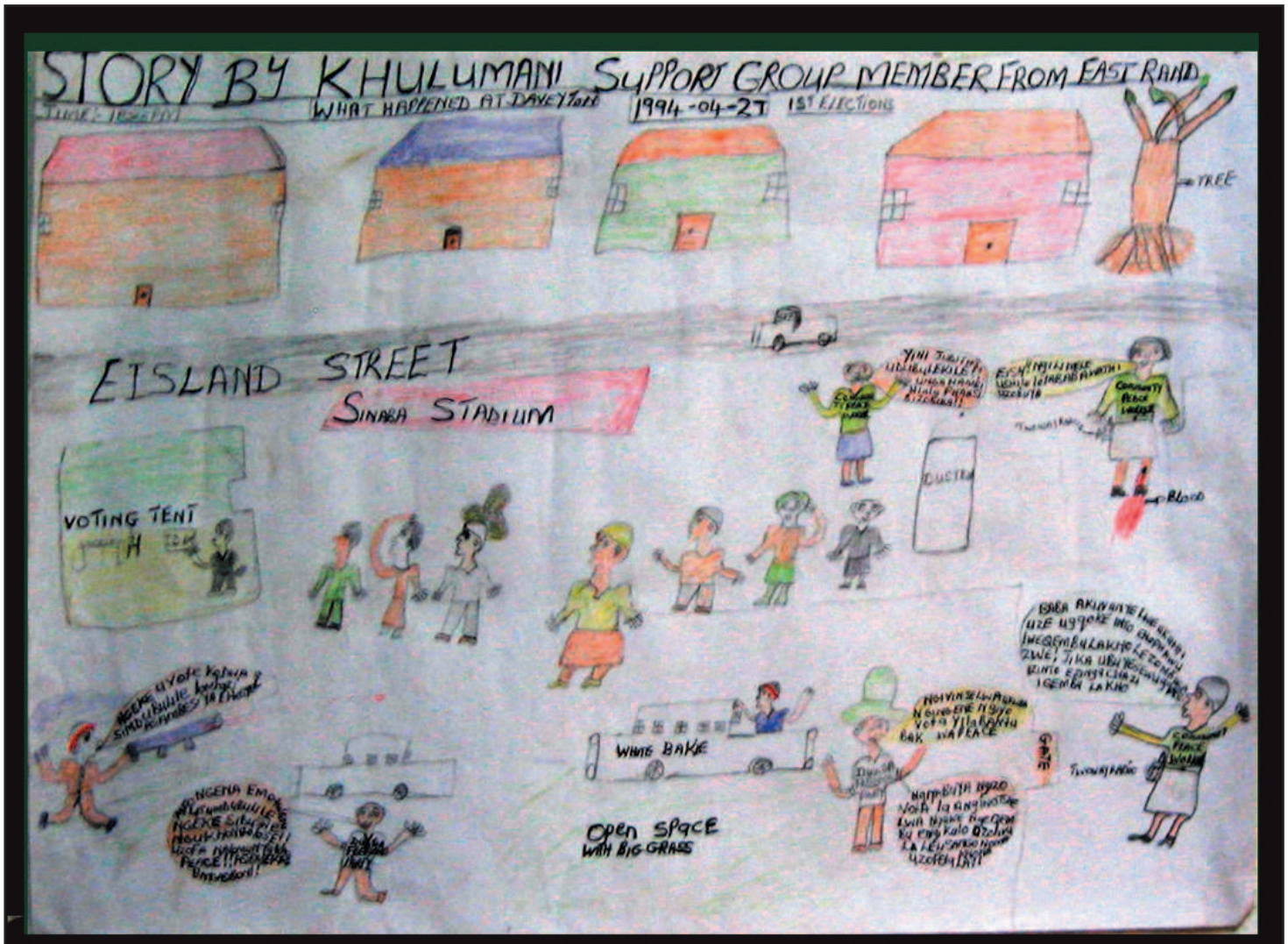
Moffat would like to know who did this to his brother, under what circumstances, and why? He is confused as to what can or should be done. He wants to know what happened, but he does not want to see the perpetrators. There was a general feeling that IFP people were responsible. The attack took place in Sotho Section which most people considered to be quite safe – the more dangerous part was the Zulu section near the hostel. But these guys in the kombi were moving about the township randomly shooting people. Moffat has the idea that they were not from the township as they did not appear to know where they were going, and were picked up quite quickly by the police.

Moffat thinks the families of at least one of the other victims killed that night attends Khulumani Support Group meetings.



at the end of a rainbow

Perhaps one of the most painful issues brought up in the workshop was that political violence in the East Rand did not end with the democratic elections in 1994. One picture shows people in Daveyton, shot while they stand in line to vote for our new, united, democratic, non-racial and non-sexist South Africa. Incidents of political violence continued into 1996 and 1997 – although not as widespread as to the massacres of the earlier transition years. But while the violence did not end on 27 April, 1994, that forms the “cut-off” date for claims from reconciliation and reparation processes.



Adelia Mabango/ Vosloorus – Sotho Section

The incident shown here occurred on 13 June 1996 in Vosloorus, corner Roets Drive Way and M.C. Botha. Adelia was in a car that was hit by a police hippo. A school colleague in the car was killed. The driver of the car died in hospital. Adelia was hospitalized and currently lives on a disability grant.

Police never took a statement from her; she is not aware of an inquest process or the outcome of an inquest.

This is one of those cases that falls outside of the ‘neat’ parameters and timelines of the TRC. The TRC argued that political violence and the consequences of that violence ended in 1994.

Adelia’s case raises wider questions about police accountability, or its absence.

My picture shows Vosloorus. The sun was in the sky; it was 13 June, 1996. On the side is the school where I used to go, doing Matric. After school we used to travel with local taxis. There were three of us; we got into a taxi.

While we were traveling, right in front of us by the corner was a group of young boys, they were marching, toytoting. The police were shooting at the boys, some were killed there.

A hippo came too fast, driving wildly. It hit our taxi. I was hurt; I don't remember what happened then. I was in hospital for three months, in the ICU for eight days.

I was the only survivor of the kombi. The driver died. The other passengers died. The people who witnessed said they cut the kombi open to take me to the hospital.

Here – the red – is the heart growing smaller, shrinking from the pain that is still here.

My family still has that pain: I cannot have children now, my reproductive system does not work. My mother is hurting, because she cannot have grandchildren.

And the government is not helping us. The officials say, this time is over, it is closed, they cannot help.

